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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 29 | Min 15 | Humidity 27% Mostly sunny Sensex 83,739 | Nifty 25,727 | Gold 1,49,186 | Silver 2,71,700 | Dollar 90.24 | Euro 106.43 | GBP 123.41

DONE UNDONE

Smart city has digital grievance redressal platforms, but most of these over smart enough to mark unaddressed complaints as resolved

PAGE 3

UNPALATABLE WASTE

As data reveals India wastes around 55 kg of food per person every year, hospitality sector in Bengaluru braces to tackle challenge

PAGE 5

Motorists BM spoke to welcome rolling gates and increased height of railings at venue allocated for protests at Freedom Park, but activists don't mince words when they call it what it looks like — 'open prison' for protesters

CITY JUST RAISED THE BAR IN INTOLERANCE FOR PROTESTS

As demand for more avenues for protests is ignored, added restrictions come as salt on wounds to campaigners

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

KAUSHIK JN

With the installation of two gates on Seshadri Road and increase in height of railings installed on the road divider and on the compound wall, the spot allocated for staging protests at Freedom Park looks like an open prison.

The recently-installed huge rolling gates and increased height of railings on Seshadri Road in front of the Freedom Park invited a mixed response from pedestrians, motorists and activists. With a ban on staging protests in other locations of the city, a specified spot in front of the Freedom Park has been allocated for staging protests.

There have been occasions when the protestors proceeded towards the Assembly or Chief Minister's official residence in support of their demands. To ensure discipline among the protestors, the police have put two rolling gates to prevent protestors from making any such marches. The police have also installed railings on the compound wall adjacent to the Freedom Park to prevent agitators from jumping the compound wall to disrupt vehicular movement.

"Adding these high gates and railings shows that they do not want anyone to see what protests are going on. Why is the government afraid of protests? The government should first withdraw the police order restricting protests to Freedom Park

—Vinay K Sreenivasa, Horatada Hakkigagi Janandolana

"I welcome the installation of the gates and increase of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 >>

For the record

K'taka is only southern state that has no record of groundwater extraction units, green tribunal told

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A report by the Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) filed with the National Green Tribunal has highlighted that Karnataka is the only southern state that has no record of illegal groundwater extraction units in the state.

As per the report, all other southern states, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana, have records on action taken against illegally operated groundwater withdrawal structures, and some are also collecting environmental compensation.

For instance, till March 2025, Kerala has cracked down on 594 illegal groundwater abstraction structure construction and withdrawal cases and has collected nearly 15.7 lakh as environmental compensation. Tamil Nadu has sealed 492 units based on the directions of the High Court in 2018.

In Karnataka, while environmental compensation for illegal groundwater extraction has not yet been implemented, the Karnataka Ground Water Authority (KGWA) says strict regulatory measures are in place to address unauthorised groundwater use.

However, activists and environmentalists say the authority is barely functional, with zero action taken on ground against illegal extraction units.

"The Karnataka Groundwater Act has many rules in place to discourage illegal groundwater extraction. However, none of these rules are being enforced or

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 >>

THINGS TO DO

01 Puppets with purpose

Atta Galatta is bringing a ventriloquism show and workshop by M Santhosh Kumar who specialises in presenting Indian values and culture, blending humour and learning using the art of ventriloquism. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: February 8, 4 pm**

02 Divine devotion

Vandana Subash, a Bharatanatyam performing artiste from Pune and a disciple of Divya Ravi, is presenting a Bharatanatyam performance, with a live ensemble of musicians. **Where: Indian Institute of World Culture, Basavanagudi; When: Feb 6, 6 pm**

03 Jazzed up

Saxophonist and composer Tineke Postma will be bringing her quartet to Bengaluru with music from her latest album VOYA, a contemporary jazz project shaped by themes of journey, movement and transformation. **Where: Windmills Craftworks, Whitefield; When: Feb 6 and 7, 9.30 pm**

04 Love and loss

Shaam-e-Baazgasht offers an intimate, cosy and immersive poetry experience drawn from a bilingual Hindi–English collection that journeys through unrequited love, longing, heartbreak, queerness, healing and the quiet courage of letting go. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: February 8, 5.30**

05 Memories in melody

Known for his soulful vocals and heartfelt compositions, Gajendra Verma will be performing live, bringing a night of music, emotions and memories. **Where: Orion Mall, Rajajinagar; When: February 7, 6 pm**

Re-examination fuels malpractice suspicions

Rumours of favouritism in selection process surface over Secretariat examination allegedly conducted twice for particular candidate, with many questioning 'unavoidable reasons' cited for conducting test

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Undersecretary of Karnataka Legislative Assembly clarifies that letter sent to candidate to attend re-examination was as per directions from higher authorities

The corridors of Vidhana Soudha were agog with speculation over alleged malpractice in a recently held re-examination for a select group of candidates who had failed a competitive test conducted in March 2025. The re-examination, held on December 4, 2025, has sparked controversy, with rumours suggesting that a retired secretary is said to have influenced authorities to allow his daughter, who did not secure the required marks in March, to reappear for the examination.

Allegations of malpractice in the selection process for English Reporters at the Karnataka Legislative Secretariat prompted Social Welfare Minister Dr HC Mahadevappa to intervene. In a letter dated April 7, 2025, addressed to Assembly Speaker UT Khader, the Minister noted that complaints had reached him regarding delays in appointing a Scheduled Caste candidate to the post. "Please take measures to select the SC candidate directly among the four candidates applied for the post of English Reporter as per the Article 335 of the Indian Constitution," the letter read.

However, Assembly Secretariat Undersecretary P Lalitha issued a letter dated November 19, 2025, to a particular candidate to attend the re-examination for the post on December 4, 2025. The competitive examination was scheduled for 11.15 am, followed by the viva voce at 3 pm on December 4, 2025. The letter stated that re-examination had to be conducted due to some 'unavoidable reasons'.

It is said that the candidate, who had failed the examination held in March 2025, passed the re-examination held on December 4, 2025, and later presented a bouquet to Assembly Speaker UT Khader while reporting for duty.

Officials and employees expressed surprise over the decision to hold a re-examination for a single candidate. Many questioned the 'unavoidable reasons' cited by the Assembly Secretary for conducting the test, and suspicions of corruption have surfaced, with staff alleging that the move was intended to favour a particular candidate. "I suspect rampant corruption in the selection of candidates for the posts of English Reporters. I am not against selecting any candidate if he/she is qualified but oppose unqualified candidates selected for the post," said a Secretariat employee, on the condition of anonymity.

P Lalitha, Undersecretary of Karnataka Legislative Assembly, said that she sent the letter for the candidate to attend re-examination as per the directions from the higher authorities. "I have nothing to do with the controversy. I followed my higher authorities' directions," she said. Karnataka State Assembly Secretary MK Vishalakshi was not available for comment.

CM directs tax exemption for film addressing social challenges

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday instructed the authorities concerned to grant tax exemption to the recently released Kannada film Landlord, which he said is based on themes of social inequality and caste-based exploitation. Taking to the social media platform X, the Chief Minister expressed hope that the decision would inspire the making of more films like Landlord that shed light on social issues in the days to come. The Chief Minister said he believes cinema is a highly effective medium for conveying meaningful messages to the public, shaping public opinion and bringing change. **— PTI**

'Can't link CJ Roy's death to I-T pressure without probe outcome'

Responding to allegations by the family of Bengaluru-based industrialist CJ Roy, founder and chairman of the Confident Group, that pressure from the Income Tax department pushed him to suicide, Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara said it was too early to link the death to I-T pressure. Speaking to reporters in Bengaluru on Tuesday, Parameshwara said, "Everything will be ascertained once the probe is completed. Until then, we cannot arrive at any conclusion. It cannot be said at this stage that the suicide occurred due to a particular reason." **— IANS**

Server snags stall scholarships for nearly 60,000 students

Thousands of degree and postgraduate students across the state are struggling to receive their scholarships due to multiple glitches in the State Scholarship Portal (SSP). Technical issues with the server, failure to link Aadhaar with bank accounts and universities not uploading last year's marks cards have left payments stuck for nearly 60,000 students, including those pursuing UG, PG, medical and professional courses. Around 17,000 postgraduate students from courses such as MBA, MCA and MTech are among those affected, despite having submitted applications months ago.

Sources said that with helplines proving ineffective and students forced to make repeated visits to cyber centres and taluk offices. Officials say out of four lakh applicants, scholarships have been disbursed to two lakh students and fee reimbursement to one lakh, while the remaining applicants still need to submit or correct documents such as Aadhaar details and marks cards. Authorities claim pending data from universities is the main bottleneck and assure that payments will be cleared once records are updated in the system. **— BMB**

7,020 properties face auction over Rs 437 cr tax dues

Cracking down on chronic defaulters, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has decided to auction 7,020 properties across five city corporations for non-payment of property tax running into Rs 437.55 crore. Despite repeated demand notices over the years, owners of these properties failed to clear their dues, prompting the civic body to initiate final action. The auctions are scheduled to be held on February 17 at the respective zonal joint commissioner offices. Officials said defaulters have been levied penalties and interest in addition to the pending property tax. Even after attachment orders were issued, payments were not made, leaving the authority with no option but to proceed with auctions. Notices related to the auction have been uploaded on the official website, and property owners have been given a last chance to stop the process by immediately clearing their dues through https://BBMPTax.karnataka.gov.in. **— BMB**

Global summit spotlights equitable knowledge sharing

The 3rd Global Summit on Diamond Open Access opened in Bengaluru, bringing together researchers, librarians, policymakers, publishers, funders and government representatives from across the world, including international organisations such as UNESCO and FAO. Being held from February 2 to 6, the Summit focuses on Diamond Open Access (OA)—a publishing model that allows free access to research without charging authors or readers and is led by academic communities with public support.

Hosted in India for the first time, the Summit places South Asia at the centre of global discussions on rethinking how scientific knowledge is produced, funded and shared. The event comes amid growing concerns over commercial open-access models that shift costs to researchers, often excluding those with limited resources.

Diamond Open Access treats publicly funded research as a global public good, aligning with the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science (2021). The Summit will conclude with the Bengaluru Roadmap, outlining actions to strengthen equitable, publicly accountable scholarly publishing worldwide. **— BMB**

Gelatin sticks, detonators seized in raid

Hulimavu police seized a large quantity of explosive materials, including 15 gelatin sticks, 30 detonators, and four gunny bags of explosive powder related substances, from an under-construction site situated in the densely populated residential locality of Akshayanagar on Tuesday.

According to police officials they received a call through 112 between 1.30 am and 2 pm, and they rushed to a 100×100 ft private site where illegal rock-blasting activities were reportedly underway without mandatory permissions. According to officials, gelatin sticks were being used to break rocks.

During the inspection, a tractor and an earth-mover allegedly used for the blasting operations were also seized. Police said the site owner and daily wage labourers present at the site fled before the police arrived.

A case has been registered against the site owner, identified as Chandru, for illegally storing and using explosives. **BMB**

Parents allege custodial assault on 11-year-old boy

The parents of an 11-year-old boy have alleged that personnel at the Parappana Agrahara Police Station assaulted their son in connection with a six-month-old gold theft case, sparking outrage and renewed concerns over custodial violence and violations of child protection laws.

The boy, an eighth-grade student and the son of Balaji, who runs a dry-cleaning shop in Vinayaka Layout, Shantipur, was accused of stealing a purse allegedly containing 120 grams of gold in August last year. According to the family, a woman had briefly stopped near the shop, handed the child ₹10, and later travelled by bus to Krishnagiri in Tamil Nadu. She subsequently claimed her purse was missing and filed a complaint accusing the boy.

Police questioned the child at the time but released him after he denied the allegations.

However, nearly seven months later, the complainant reportedly revived the accusation. The parents allege that the child was summoned again and physically assaulted inside the police station.

They claim officers beat the boy in their presence, switched off the lights to intimidate him, and forced him to record a video confession. The police allegedly threatened that the parents would be jailed for three years if the gold was not returned.

The child reportedly suffered ear injuries and was admitted to a hospital for treatment. Visuals of the injured boy and a statement from his father have since emerged. Family questions case reopening, demands justice. **BMB**

Fake emergency run lands driver FIR

Acting on rising public complaints about the misuse of ambulances on city roads, traffic police registered a case against an ambulance driver for allegedly using sirens and flashing lights without any medical emergency.

Traffic personnel on duty at the Sadashivanagar Police Station Junction noticed the ambulance moving at high speed with its siren and top lights activated, weaving through traffic and disrupting normal vehicular movement, last Friday.

When the vehicle was stopped and inspected, officers found that there were no patients inside.

The driver reportedly admitted that he was travelling towards Banashankari for personal work and was not responding to any emergency calls. Officials misuse confuses motorists, undermines emergencies, delays lifesaving services; FIR registered under BNS, MV Act. **BMB**

Fake business partner abducts, robs man

Banashankari police have arrested four men for allegedly kidnapping a 28-year-old man, assaulting him, and extorting cash and valuables worth ₹4.47 lakh.

The arrested have been identified as Nihar, a resident of Bannerghatta, and Santhosh, Madhu, and Manjunath, all from JP Nagar. Police said ₹39,000 has been recovered from the accused so far.

According to the complaint filed by Nithin Gowda, he had studied BBA at Alva's Degree College between 2019 and 2021, where he became acquainted with Nihar through a mutual friend.

The accused reportedly assaulted him, obtained his password, transferre Rs 47,000 from his bank account via Phone Pe and snatched his 29-gram gold chain worth nearly Rs 4 lakh. The further investigation is going on. **BMB**

FIR against Puneeth Kerehalli for threats

The SJ Park Police have registered an FIR against murder-accused Puneeth Kerehalli and two others for allegedly abusing and threatening a man, following directions from a Bengaluru court. The case was filed on February 2.

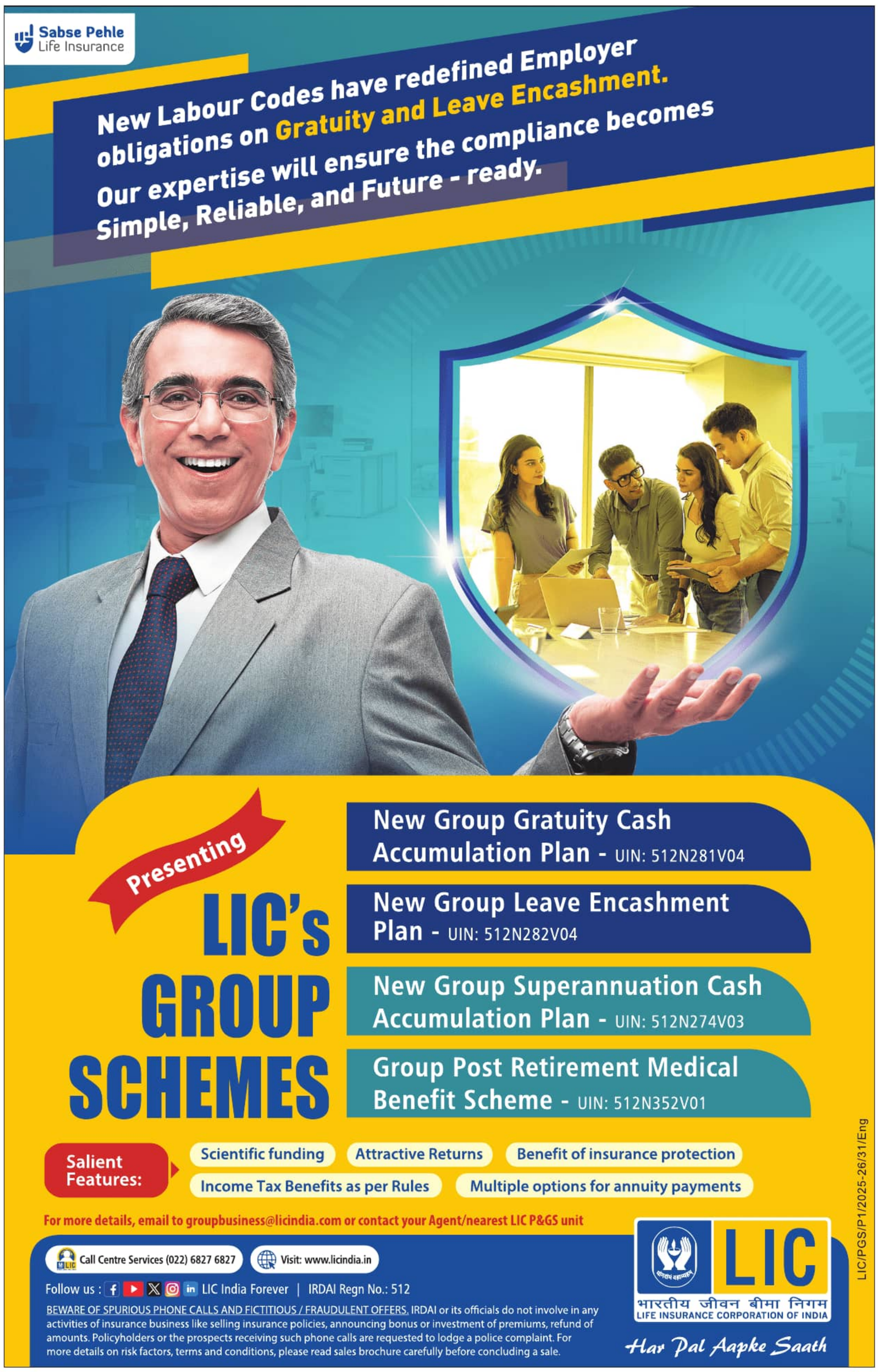
The complainant, 39-year-old Byrappa Harish Kumar, president of Karnataka Ranadheera Pade, stated that he had participated in a televised debate on the Dharmasthala issue on a local news channel on October 9, along with a person identified as Giliyar. According to the FIR, a disagreement arose between Kumar and Giliyar during the programme over their differing opinions.

Kumar alleged that after the debate concluded, a group of individuals allegedly associated with Puneeth Kerehalli, and present at the behest of Giliyar, verbally abused him, attempted to assault him, and issued threats as he was leaving the venue. Police registered the case. **BMB**

Auto driver stabbed while breaking up fight

Four individuals have been arrested in connection with a stabbing incident in which an autorickshaw driver was seriously injured after he intervened in a quarrel between a group of youths in the limits of KR Puram Police Station on Saturday night.

The arrested accused have been identified as Roshan, Mamu alias Wasim, Yasir, and Kaleem. The incident occurred around 8.15 pm on February 1 on Madina Masjid Road near Devasandra. Police said Roshan, an autorickshaw driver, was returning home with his friend Shoaib after offering namaz when they noticed a heated argument between two youths, reportedly over a Nepali girl. When Roshan attempted to pacify the group and stop the fight, the assailants allegedly attacked him with deadly weapons in the middle of the road. He sustained serious injuries and was rushed to a nearby hospital, where he is currently undergoing treatment. **BMB**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Online fixes ignore real street problems

Grievances get marked as resolved, though civic disarray persists while citizens go from app to app looking for solutions

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Despite Bengaluru's push to project itself as a "smart city" with multiple digital grievance redressal platforms, several residents say their complaints remain unresolved on the ground even when portals mark them as "resolved". From broken footpaths and illegal hoardings to pothole-ridden roads, citizens allege that the grievance redressal system is of no use.

One such case involves Caleb Friesen, a Canadian national and Bengaluru resident, who filed a complaint on January 29 regarding a severely damaged footpath next to Mantri Avenue Mall and KHB Games Village in Koramangala, along 80 Feet Road (Srinivagilu Main Road). The complaint concerned a broken section of the footpath, including a pit located directly in front of Koramangala Stadium, posing a serious risk to pedestrians.

While the Bengaluru Smart City grievance portal showed that the complaint had been assigned to an engineer, Friesen said that even by February 3, no action had been taken on the ground. "I visited the spot multiple times over the last five days after the complaint was marked resolved, but nothing has changed. The footpath is still in the same dangerous condition," he said.

When checked on the portal later, the grievance status showed the complaint as "registered", but without any visible remedial measures taken. "In the past, I've made videos highlighting pedestrian safety issues, and many of them go viral. My aim is to see Indian infrastructure improve. But this time, instead of posting a video immediately, I wanted to see how the formal system works," he said. He added that he hoped the issue would be fixed quietly through official channels, allowing him to later share a positive before-and-after story. "If the issue was solved without public pressure, it would have been a great example of change. But it's the fifth day since filing the complaint and there's still no action."

Residents describe stalled fixes, shifting grievance statuses and civic inaction, forcing pedestrians into unsafe conditions despite repeated official assurances

Friesen also pointed out that virality often becomes necessary to draw attention. "We have to optimise content for people to notice and for things to change. I want to inspire others to take initiative, but the system also needs to respond."

Similar concerns were raised by another citizen who complained on December 12 about the public footpath on 15th Cross in HSR Layout's 6th Sector being heavily encroached upon due to construction activity, vehicle parking, shops, garbage dumping and plant pots. With no action taken, pedestrians are forced to walk on the road, increasing the risk of accidents. On social media platform X, a user named Dino highlighted multiple grievances raised on the portal regarding illegal flex banners and hoardings on Brigade Road, MG Road and Church Street. He also flagged dangerous and broken sidewalks on MG Road that were marked "resolved" without any actual repair work.

"This is not negligence. This is deliberate dereliction of duty and organised accountability theatre, where officials close grievances to protect themselves, not to serve citizens," the user wrote. Questioning the system's performance metrics, he asked whether this was how the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) and the Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC) evaluated efficiency.

In another case, a resident named Dhruv complained via the 1533 WhatsApp grievance helpline about severe potholes near VVB Bakery in Ittamadu, Hosakerahalli, which cause daily traffic congestion. According to him, officials assigned to the complaint disclaimed responsibility, saying the issue did not fall under their ward. "Some numbers didn't answer calls, others said they would look into it and never responded. For two weeks, nobody took ownership. I even volunteer to manage traffic at this location; it gets worse every day. Even when vehicles are allowed to move, they crawl because of the bad road. Nobody is taking ownership of the issue," he said.

PAPER PUBLICATION

My client Smt. Annapoorna BV, aged about 45 years, W/o Vikasravi A Joshi, residing at # T-3, Lake Lamp Apartments, 5th Cross, ITI Layout, Mallathalli Bengaluru North, Bengaluru- 560056, is intending to purchase a vacant site bearing number 151, property number 150200301700429344 as per Form Number 11A issued by Tavarekere Panchayat, Bengaluru South measuring east to west 9.14 meters and north to south 12.19 meters, totally measuring 111.41 meters, out of Sy.No. 161/4 of Tavarekere Village and Hobli, Bengaluru South, Bengaluru, more fully described in the schedule from GOVINDRAJU son of Late Hanumaiah, residing at # 876 Srigandhakavalu D group Layout 60ft road Bengaluru-560091. If anyone has got any claim over the schedule property, they can file their objection with authentic docu ments in support of their objection and claims if any, within 10 days from the date of this publication, failing which, my client will go ahead with the transaction with respect to the schedule property.

SCHEDULE

vacant site bearing number 151, property number 150200301700 429344 as per Form Number 11A issued by Tavarekere Panchayat, Bengaluru South measuring east to west 9.14 meters and north to south 12.19 meters, totally measuring 111.41 meters, out of Sy.No. 161/4 of Tavarekere Village and Hobli, Bengaluru South, Bengaluru bounded on : East by Site number 150 West by : Park North by 30ft Road South by : Survey number.

Sd/- **Krishna Raja,**
KAR1155/11, Advocate
111, 1st Floor, 2nd Main
18th Cross, Jayanagara,
Mysuru-570005. Mob: 8431454192

Rolling gates, increased height of railings to control agitators

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

height of railings to prevent unruly agitators disrupting traffic on Seshadri Road. Motorists have to undergo a lot of problems whenever there is an agitation by farmers, anganwadi workers and others," said Prathap N, a motorist. Another motorist Kumar S, too was all for the need for agitators to maintain order, though he spoke in favour of the protestors. "I sympathise with the agitators. They agitate in support of their demands. If the authorities had met their demands, there would have been no need for them to come all the way to Freedom Park to stage a protest. However, the agitators must take care not to cause problems for motorists by blocking the road," he said.

Activists were more upfront about the issue. "This move by the state government shows that they want to jail dissent! On the one hand they speak of the Constitution; on the other hand they restrict protests to Freedom Park. Adding these high gates and railings shows that they do not want anyone to see what protests are going on. Why is the government afraid of protests? The government should first withdraw the police order restricting protests to Freedom Park," said Vinay K Sreenivasa, Member, Horatada Hakkigagi Janandolana.

M Jayamma, general secretary, Karnataka State Anganwadi Workers and Assistant' Federation, said the protest venue looks like a prison. "The authorities concerned must remove the rolling gates. The spot reserved for staging protests at the Freedom Park looks like an open prison," said Jayamma. Describing the installation of rolling gates and increase of height of railings as a method to suppress agitations, BG Nanjundappa Kadathanamale, State Secretary, Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha, said that no official or elected representative or a minister bothers if the agitation is held at the specified location. "The police have to have to allow the agitators to protest or to take out rallies on the road to draw the attention of the state government," he said.

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Public nuisance

D'Souza Road

Illegal public urination near D'Souza Road has continued unchecked for over 10 years, despite repeated complaints, leaving residents in unhygienic conditions.

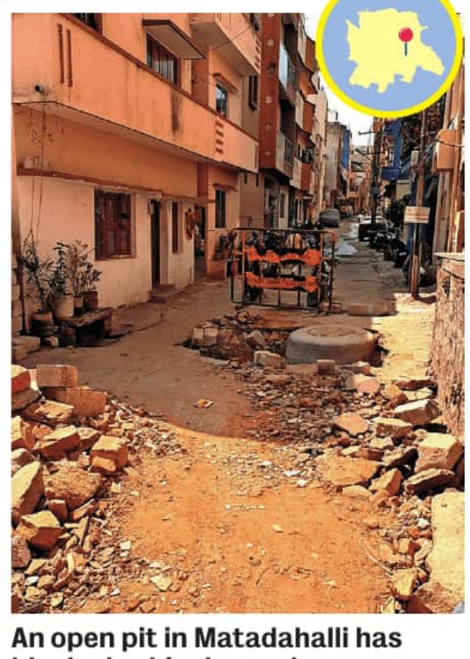
Safety hazard

KH Road

A damaged stretch near the KH Road flyover has caused frequent falls and injuries for months, with authorities yet to take action.

Access blocked

Matadahalli



An open pit in Matadahalli has blocked vehicular and emergency access for over a month, with no response from civic authorities.

Food waste crisis looms large across B'luru

Rising volumes of discarded food from restaurants and events becomes cause for concern; Centre, citing food waste as national challenge, urges greater public awareness to curb wastage

Catering at weddings and large functions is said to be one of the biggest sources of food waste

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Food waste in Bengaluru is becoming impossible to ignore, with everything from untouched buffet spreads and oversized restaurant portions to excess food at weddings and corporate events routinely finding its way into the bin. The trend mirrors a wider national challenge highlighted in Parliament, where the Centre cited UN data showing India wastes an estimated 55 kg of food per person every year. Though lower than the global average of 79 kg, officials say the scale is troubling for a country where many still lack regular access to nutritious meals. The Union Minister for State for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution BL Verma said, "We have advised states to include awareness on preventing food waste in school syllabi and continue to run campaigns across media platforms. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India has launched the 'Save Food Share Food' initiative to encourage safe redistribution of surplus food through verified channels."

City push

In Bengaluru, the hospitality sector has been taking steps to address the growing problem. The Bruhat Bengaluru Hotels Association had earlier urged hoteliers to work more closely with industry partners and customers to curb waste. Association president PC Rao said global numbers show one-third of food produced is wasted while one in seven people remain undernourished. He noted that the city reflects the same imbalance, with nearly 30 per cent of served food going uneaten and large quantities of oilseeds, meat, dairy and almost half of fruits and vegetables ending up as waste. He appealed to diners to order responsibly and pointed out that misuse of water, electricity and napkins also contributes to the problem.

Officials say scale of food wastage is troubling for country where many continue to lack regular access to nutritious meals

Event excess

Another hotelier said that catering at weddings and large functions remains one of the biggest sources of waste. Excessive menus and overestimation mean a sizable portion is discarded. The association has been holding meetings with hoteliers to develop action plans, including posters urging staff and guests to be mindful of the value of food.

Wipro penalised for misusing judicial process

Dispute stems from non-payment of ex-gratia promised to an employee as part of separation arrangement

The Karnataka High Court has imposed costs of Rs 50,000 on Wipro Enterprises Pvt Ltd, holding that the company had misused the judicial process by refusing to release a legitimate payment owed to a former employee.

The dispute concerned an ex-gratia amount promised to Ratnesh Pandey, who had served the company for nearly twelve years. Pandey resigned in August 2017, and his resignation was accepted the following month. As part of the separation arrangement, Wipro had agreed to pay him Rs 6.32 lakh after 18 months, subject to certain non-compete conditions.

Pandey claimed that despite complying with the agreed terms, the company failed to make the payment even after repeated follow-ups. He subsequently approached a civil court in Bengaluru, seeking recovery of the amount along with interest. The trial court ruled in his favour and directed Wipro to release the payment with interest.

Challenging this order, Wipro moved the High Court, arguing that the former employee was not entitled to the ex-gratia amount as he had not formally accepted the terms of the cessation letter. The company contended that the absence of a signed acceptance disentitled him from the payment.

Rejecting this submission, Justice Sachin Shankar Magadum observed that Wipro had already acted upon the cessation of employment and could not later rely on a technical objection to deny the payment.

The High Court held that Wipro's resistance amounted to an attempt to avoid an admitted liability and described the appeal as an abuse of the legal process. Dismissing the company's challenge, the court imposed Rs 50,000 as costs, underlining that such conduct could not be encouraged. —BMB

Goripalya–Hosahalli rail bridge finally ready

The 238-metre-long Goripalya–Hosahalli railway bridge, a key link in West Bengaluru, has finally been completed, bringing relief to thousands of commuters after nearly two years of delays. However, the Railways are yet to officially announce when the bridge will be opened for use. Built after the old bridge was declared unsafe, the project has been marked by technical hurdles and administrative bottlenecks, though motorists now have reason to hope that the long wait is nearing its end.

While the old bridge was razed in just three weeks, the new one took nearly three years to complete. Officials said that additional works, including a 200-metre approach road, concrete road in Vijayanagar and installation of 20 streetlights, have doubled the project cost to around Rs 12 crore. —BMB

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Doctors revolt brews over K'taka govt health policies

KGMOA flags ignored consultations, frozen seniority lists and policy rollbacks, saying continued neglect may push doctors towards statewide agitation protests

Iffath Fathima
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The Karnataka Government Medical Officers' Association (KGMOA) has raised serious concerns over what it describes as arbitrary and unilateral decisions by the State government, stating that these actions are adversely affecting doctors' morale, service conditions and public healthcare delivery.

In a detailed representation submitted to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, the association said that despite repeatedly offering constructive suggestions to the Health and Family Welfare Department, doctors' concerns have consistently been ignored. Instead, several orders have allegedly been issued overnight without consultation, creating anxiety among doctors and negatively impacting both their mental well-being and official duties.

One of the key grievances flagged by the KGMOA relates to cadre and recruitment rules. The association said meetings and petitions seeking amendments have been ongoing for nearly four years, but no changes have been implemented so far, leaving doctors frustrated over prolonged delays.

Another major concern is the long-pending revision of doctors' seniority lists. Rules mandate updates every December, but revisions have stalled for thirteen years. This delay has blocked promotions, denying eligible senior doctors elevation to Joint Director and Additional Director posts. Several doctors retired without receiving a single promotion during service.

The association also pointed out that despite repeated requests for amendments to the Transfer Act, transfers are being carried out throughout the year

KGMOA President Ravindranath M Meti, District Health and Family Welfare Officer, Bengaluru Urban district, said that under the in-service quota, doctors pursuing MD/MS postgraduate degrees were earlier posted in medical colleges with salary, fees and allowances. However, from this year, an order states that such doctors will not receive salary, fees or allowances. Doctors in Medical Education, ESI and autonomous institutions continue to get these benefits, depriving Health Department doctors and violating fundamental rights under current government policy decisions statewide.

The association also pointed out that despite repeated requests for amendments to the Transfer Act, transfers are being carried out throughout the year. Referring to allowances, Meti said that during the COVID-19 pandemic, special allowances were increased in recognition of doctors' services, but these have not been revised since. Instead, attempts are allegedly being made to reduce benefits. Doctors are now demanding a CGHS-pattern pay scale for all Health Department doctors.

The KGMOA further expressed concern over the withdrawal of experienced doctors from district hospitals attached to medical colleges, restricting their services only to rural and taluk-level institutions. Restrictions on private practice after duty hours, particularly the ban on inpatient care, were flagged as harmful to rural patients who depend on skilled government surgeons.

The association said administrative experience gained by doctors is being ignored while allocating administrative posts. In addition, chronic shortages of essential medicines such as IV fluids, antibiotics and emergency drugs are affecting patient care, with hospitals often lacking funds to procure supplies.

Vacant posts across the department have not been filled in time, increasing the workload on existing staff. The transfer of MCH specialists from upgraded community health centres has raised fears of increased maternal and infant mortality in rural areas. Concerns were also raised over Food Safety Department posts being handed over to Revenue officials, despite rules mandating science graduates for these roles. The association demanded that these posts be restored to the Health Department.

"Karnataka has achieved top health indicators in the country due to the hard work of government doctors and staff. Diseases like smallpox, polio and COVID-19 were controlled because of this system," Meti said, urging the Chief Minister to intervene immediately. The association warned that if the issues are not addressed urgently, government doctors would be forced to launch an intensified statewide protest.

'K'taka Ground Water Authority defunct entity'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

implemented on ground. KGWA is a defunct body, and the majority of the officials are unaware of the rules around groundwater extraction," said Sandeep Anirudhan of Citizens' Agenda for Bengaluru.

Even so, KGWA, in the report filed with CGWB, has underlined that the authority is imposing penalties on entities for late application of No Objection Certificate (NOC), delays in renewal, and violations of conditions stipulated in the NOCs. The authority says it monitors and takes action against illegal groundwater withdrawal through inspections, issuing show-cause notices, and initiating legal proceedings where necessary.

As per KGWA, groundwater extraction in over-exploited taluks for developmental activities, including infrastructure and industrial projects, is only permitted if the proponent ensures 100% recharge of groundwater equivalent to the proposed extraction. Moreover, units with proven sustainable water management strategies are only considered for a NOC. The extraction of groundwater in these areas is as per CGWA's revised guidelines in 2020.

"In such overexploited (OE) areas, the NOC is valid only for two years, irrespective of the type of project. No expansion of bore well infrastructure and no enhancement of the permitted quantity of groundwater extraction is allowed during or after this period. Renewal of NOC also requires strict compliance with recharge norms and monitoring conditions," KGWA has informed. "These statements are only to mislead the CGWB. Whitefield is an overexploited area. We have approached KGWA in the past to complain about illegal borewells in our area. However, all those borewells, dug for commercial purposes in overexploited areas, are still functional," said a resident of Whitefield.

No playground status, passport office wall upheld

Rejecting public interest plea, High Court allows Centre to proceed with compound wall at Passport Seva Kendra site

The Karnataka High Court has dismissed a public interest litigation (PIL) challenging the construction of a compound wall around a Passport Seva Kendra in Bengaluru, rejecting claims that the land was being used as a public playground. The court observed that while concerns over the rapid depletion of open spaces in the city were legitimate, the government could not be restrained from using land lawfully allotted to it, particularly when there was no material to establish that the land was officially designated as a playground.

The PIL was filed by the Dr BR Ambedkar Youth Social and Cultural Welfare Trust, which sought directions to demolish structures raised on a parcel of land measuring one acre and thirty guntas in Survey No.12 of Koramangala village, Begur Hobli, Bengaluru. The trust alleged that the land had been used for decades by schoolchildren and local residents as a playground and community open space.

According to the petitioner, the Passport Seva Kendra was unauthorisedly operating from adjoining Survey Nos.9 and 10, and the construction of a compound wall around the disputed land had effectively blocked access to children and the public in an already congested locality.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice CM Poonacha examined submissions made by Additional Solicitor General Arvind Kamath, who appeared for the Union of India and the Passport Seva Kendra. Kamath relied on a government order dated January 25, 2023, stating that an error in an earlier government order issued in November 1994 had been corrected.

The Union government explained that the 1994 order had mistakenly referred to Survey No.61, and that the rectification clarified that three acres of land allotted to the Ministry of External Affairs for construction of the Regional Passport Office fell under different survey numbers. Based on this clarification, the government contended that the Passport Seva Kendra was operating from land validly allotted to it.

Accepting these submissions, the High Court held that the foundation on which the PIL had been filed no longer survived. The bench observed that it was undisputed that the Central Government was occupying the land as lawfully allotted. While acknowledging concerns regarding shrinking open spaces, the court said it could not accept that the Central Government should be interdicted from utilising land allocated to it for a public purpose.

The court noted that the petitioner had failed to produce zonal plans or documentary evidence to demonstrate that the land was earmarked as a playground. It emphasised that public interest litigation must rest on clear legal and factual foundations. The PIL was therefore dismissed. The ruling effectively clears the way for continued official use of the premises by the Passport Seva Kendra authorities without further legal obstruction. — BMB

KSDL sets products record in January

State-owned KSDL, producer of the famous Mysore sandal soaps, has set an all-time production record by manufacturing a total of 4,894.777 metric tonnes of products in January this year, Minister for Large and Medium Industries M B Patil said on Tuesday. In a statement, he stated that January production comprised 3,798 tonnes in the soap segment, 941 tonnes in the detergents segment, and 155 tonnes in the cosmetics segment.

He recalled that Karnataka Soaps and Detergents Limited (KSDL) had earlier achieved record production of 4,735 tonnes in December 2025. He said extensive measures have been taken to expand markets and strengthen branding in North India and overseas. In addition, a system of continuous, quality-driven production operating across three shifts has been put in place. The state-owned enterprise currently offers over 45 products, with more to be introduced in the coming days. — PTI

Karnataka Assembly erupts over Centre's rural jobs law

Congress moves resolution urging Centre to repeal new rural employment legislation amid BJP protests

INFOCUS VB-G RAM G ACT

Siddaramaiah addresses the Assembly at Vidhana Soudha, on Tuesday

Resolution demands scrapping new scheme, restoring employment guarantee, citing financial strain, panchayat powers erosion and constitutional violations

The Congress government in Karnataka on Tuesday moved a resolution in the Legislative Assembly urging the Centre to immediately repeal the new rural employment legislation, the VB-G RAM G Act, and reinstate the UPA-era MGNREGA in its original form, amid strong objections from the opposition BJP.

The resolution, moved by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, said the 'VB-G RAM G Act', "unilaterally" enacted by the Centre, is "detrimental to the basic ideals of federalism and the right to livelihood of rural people". "With a view to protecting the right to life of the rural people of Karnataka, this House urges the Central Government to immediately repeal the Viksit Bharat–Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-GRAM-G) Act, which is against the federal principle, imposes a severe burden on the state exchequer, violates the principle of decentralisation, and has taken away the powers and rights of the Gram Panchayats; and to reinstate the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in its original form, which has led to rural asset creation and self-reliance among the poor," the resolution read out by the Chief Minister said.

Stating that the Assembly reiterates its full commitment to the Panchayati Raj system and the principles of decentralisation of power, which are the bedrock of Indian democracy, it said: "This House takes serious view of the repeal of the MGNREGA, which was a Sanjeevini (something that gives life) for the rural poor and an integral part of rural life."

"This House strongly opposes this move by the Centre to bring in the VB-G RAM G Act repealing the MGNREGA," it added.

BJP members, led by Leader of the Opposition R Ashoka, immediately objected, saying, "Don't say the House opposes it; say the Congress government opposes it. Don't make us party to this."

However, the Chief Minister, repeatedly asserting "this House", continued reading the resolution, asking opposition members to raise their objections during the discussion. This angered the opposition members, who shouted slogans against the government, with some even accusing the Congress of "loot" under the MGNREGA.

The constant sloganeering by BJP members disturbed Siddaramaiah, who had initiated the debate in favour of the resolution. The enraged Chief Minister asked ruling Congress members to respond, leading to chaos. Speaker U T Khader then adjourned the House for lunch.

The resolution refers to the Viksit Bharat–Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act by the abbreviation "VB-GRAM-G Act" instead of the official "VB-G RAM G Act". Criticising this, the BJP said the ruling party has an "allergy" to the name 'Ram'.

The Karnataka Cabinet had earlier decided to legally challenge the VB-G RAM G Act, which replaces MGNREGA. The resolution states the new Act violates Article 21 by undermining Gram Panchayats' autonomy under the 73rd Amendment, contradicting the spirit of Gram Swaraj.

Under MGNREGA, the Centre bore 100% of wages for 100 man-days, but the new law mandates states pay 40%, effectively covering 50 of 125 man-days. This, the resolution says, undermines federalism and violates Articles 258 and 280.

Karnataka, a top tax-paying state with strong decentralisation, also faces reduced tax shares from 4.71% (14th Finance Commission) to 4.131% (16th Finance Commission). Imposing a 40% financial burden threatens the state's economic security.

The Act limits Gram Panchayats' planning freedom, restricts work to 10 months, and provides no assurance on wage rates or coverage, potentially pushing rural labourers into exploitation. —PTI

INBRIEF

Constables suspended over court lapses

Two police constables attached to the KP Agrahara police station have been suspended for alleged negligence in the discharge of their official duties, senior police officials said on Tuesday.

According to the department, the constables had been assigned to serve court summonses to individuals connected with a cheque bounce case and allegedly did not issue proper warrants. However, they reportedly failed to execute the task within the stipulated time, causing delays in the investigation. The lapse also resulted in the investigating officer receiving adverse remarks during a recent court hearing, prompting higher authorities to take serious note of the matter.

Following a preliminary inquiry ordered by senior officers, the duo was placed under suspension. A departmental probe has been initiated to examine the circumstances surrounding the negligence and to determine further disciplinary action. Police officials expressed concern over a growing pattern of carelessness, insubordination, and misconduct within the force, stressing that strict measures would be taken to ensure accountability and professionalism.

The suspensions come close on the heels of another controversy at the same station. Recently, the station inspector was caught red-handed by Lokayukta officials while allegedly accepting a bribe from a realtor and a moneylender in return for official favours. He was subsequently booked under the Prevention of Corruption Act and suspended. BMB

Jewellery shop owners told to upgrade security

In a bid to strengthen crime prevention and enhance public safety, the Sampigehalli Sub-Division of the North-East Division convened a meeting with jewellery shop owners, directing them to adopt stringent security measures to prevent armed robberies and theft.

During the meeting, police officials briefed traders on best practices and guidelines issued by the Commissioner of Police, emphasising the need for robust surveillance and preparedness. Shop owners were instructed to install CCTV cameras with full coverage and recording facilities, functional alarm and alert systems, and to implement a multi-layered security framework. Periodic inspection of security infrastructure and the immediate reporting of suspicious activity were also made mandatory.

Police sought active cooperation from all jewellers to maintain law and order and deter organised crime targeting high-value establishments.

In a parallel effort to curb mobile thefts, Vidyaranyapura and Kodigehalli police successfully traced 12 lost and misplaced mobile phones using the Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR) portal and returned them to their owners. On February 2, 16 phones were recovered in Kodigehalli. Citizens are urged to secure phones with passwords or biometrics, note IMEI numbers, avoid public display, and report losses via the CEIR portal. BMB

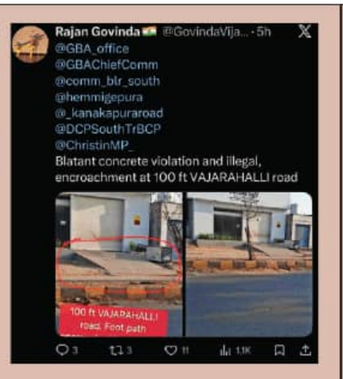
SOCIALTATTLE

What's Tweeting

A regular commuter posted on platform X about the daily struggle near Agara Flyover, pointing out heavy dust and questioning why mechanical sweeping machines are not deployed, warning of rising allergy and respiratory issues for commuters.

Sandeep Pai
@iamsandeeppai
X.com
Getting past Agara Flyover is hell everyday with all that dust!
Whats stopping @GBAChiefComm running the sweeping machines here? Would save a lot of people from allergies! @bengalurupost1
@ChristinMP_ @GBA_office

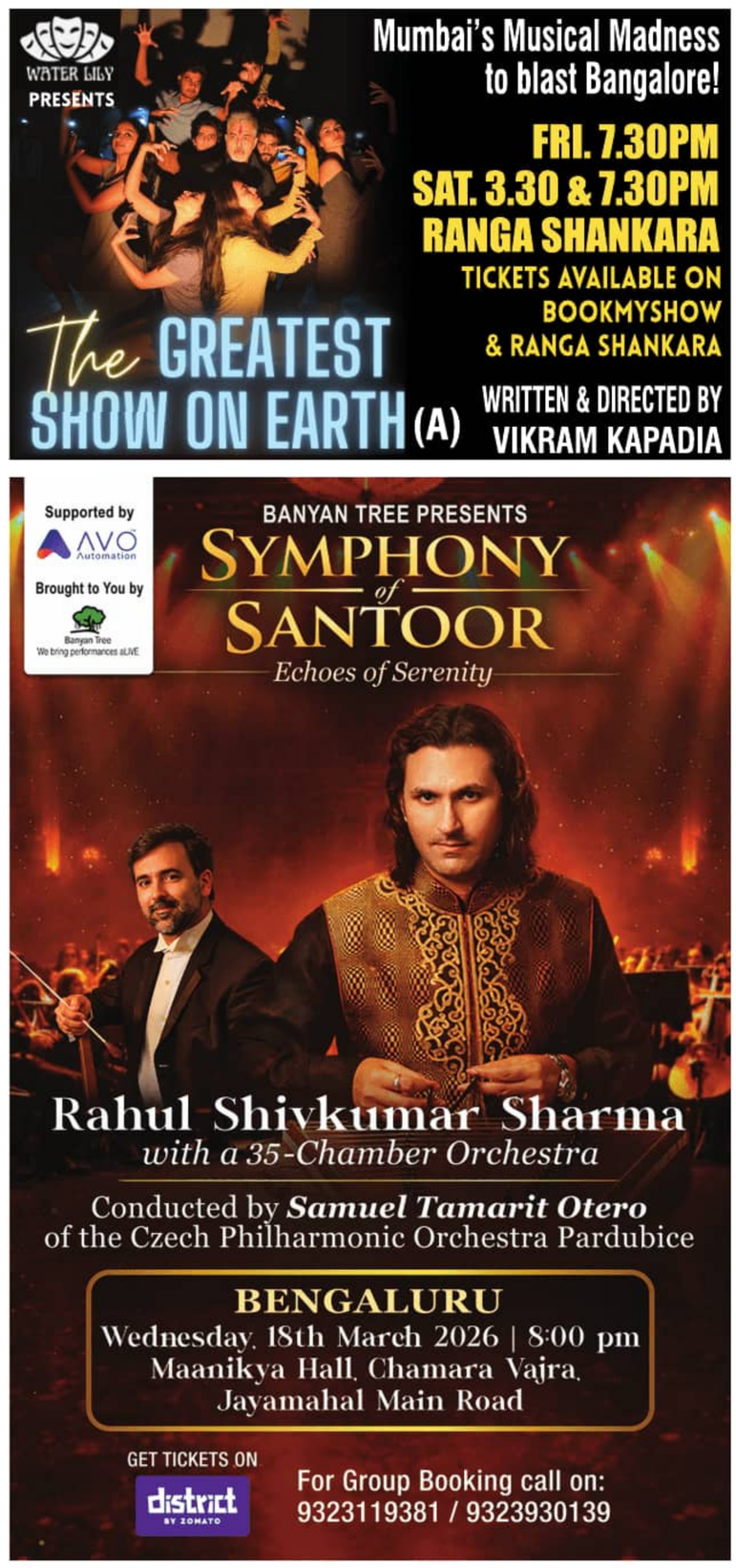
Citizen posted and alleged blatant concrete violations and illegal encroachment along the 100-ft Vajarahalli Road, raising concerns over unchecked construction and loss of public space.



Neethu @neethuneetha · 6h
Favorite hobby of Bangaloreans is to dump garbage on the roadside. Tech city Bangalore is literally a Garbage city. All thanks to @DKShivakumar @GBAChiefComm

That went viral

A social media user highlighted roadside garbage dumping in Bengaluru, sharing images and remarking that the city's "favourite hobby" seems to be illegal dumping, calling the situation embarrassing for a so-called tech city.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I, Prasanna Lakshmi Bhadraraju, residing at No.305, 3rd Floor B Block, Lakvin Elite Apartment, Hemmigepura ward No.198, Srinivasapura Cross, Near Aditya Bakery, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560098. I have changed my name to T Prasanna Lakshmi vide affidavit dated : 29/01/2026 Before Notary N Sandhya.

I, Shameem, w/o Nasir, R/o No 45 KHB Quarters, Thilaknagar BTB Area, Jayanagar, Bengaluru-560041, have changed my name to Shamim for all Purposes.

I, Cheluvegowda S/O, Doddamoogegowda R/o 103/1, Channahalli Mandya 571415 have changed my name to Chaluvegowda for all purposes.

CHANGE OF NAME & FAITH

I **ADITI SHARMA** D/o Mr. Pankaj Sharma and Mrs. Renu Sharma residing at A-16 S1, Shri Balaji Towers Kirti Palace Jagriti Vihar, Meerut, UP-250004, have changed my name from **ADITI SHARMA to ADITI KAUR** and also my religion from Hinduism to Sikhism and herein after be called as **ADITI KAUR** vide affidavit dated 09.01.2026 sworn before C.N.Chandrashekar, Advocate & Notary Govt. of India, Bengaluru - 560097.

I, Siddalingaswami Mrityunjayaswami Hanagodimath S/o, Mrityunjayaswami R/o Plot No 36/3A, Sedam Road, 5th Main 3rd Cross 2nd Block, G D A Veerendra Patil Exnt, Gulbarga 585105. have changed my name to Siddalingswami M Hanagodimath for all purposes.

I, Jayalakshamma B J W/o H Puttaiah R/o #keremegala - koppalu Grama Mylarapattana Post Nagamangala Talluk Mylara Pattana Mandya 571432 have changed my name to Jayalakshmamma B J for all purposes.

I, Anupama Chandrashekhar R/o No B 504 Vara Vasundra Bhcs Layout Banashankari 6th Stage 1st Block Subraman yapura Bengaluru 560061, have changed my name to Anupama Mali Patil for all purposes.

I Shweta Batho D/O, Kamal Chand R/o B2-704, Ramky One North Doddaballapur Road Avalahalli Yelahanka Bangalore Pin-560064 have changed my name to Shweta P Kumar .

I Mudaseer Mahdi Mir Azhar S/o Mir Azhar Mahdi, R/O.21 Samad House, 3rdCross, KHB Main Road, Kavalbyrasandra, RT Nagar, Bangalore-560032 Changed my Name as Mudaseer Mahdi

I, Humera Banu V A D/O Velican Abdulla Afzal Pasha R/o No 4 2nd Cross Potters Colony Chickpet Behind New Bamboo Bazaar Bengaluru 560002 have changed my name to Humera Banu.

I, Nagamani. N S. Resident. No.16, Naga Krupa, Kuvempu Road, Geddalahalli, Blr-94, changed My Name from Nagamani & Nagamani. S To Nagamani. N S to all further purposes.(N S full form is Nichbat Sarveswara.)

I, GOPALKRISHNA BHAT, R/O No. 1878, Sri Vasudev Nilaya, 3rd Main, 3rd cross, MCECHS Layout, Dr.Shivaramakaranth nagar, Bangalore - 560064 have changed my name from GOPALKRISHNA RAM BHAT to GOPALKRISHNA BHAT.

I, Somashekar Shivanand, residing at No.515, Chaitrashree Lifestyle, Kenchenahalli Main Road, Halagevaderahalli, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Bengaluru 560098 I have changed my name to SOMASHEKAR TEGGI vide affidavit dated : 31/01/2026 Before Notary N Sandhya.

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KASHMIR WITH TULIP GARDEN 6 DAYS
MARCH: 24, 26, 29, 31 APR: 3, 5, 8, 10, 13, 15
AMRITSAR VAISHNODEVI SRINAGAR 10 DAYS
MAR: 15, 27 APR: 2, 9, 16, 23 MAY: 5, 12, 19, 26
CHAR DHAM YATRA 19 DAYS APR: 25 MAY: 1, 6, 9, 12, 16
KASHI/BADRINATH KEDARNATH* 21/14* DAYS
APR: 26 MAY: 1, 3*, 8*, 17, 24* JUNE: 1, 8*, 15, 22*, 24
SIMLA KULLU MANALI/NAINITAL CORBETT* 15/8* DAYS
MAR: 4, 8*, 15*, 18, 22* APR: 1, 1*, 8*, 15, 15*, 22*
ASSAM MEGHALAYA/ARUNACHAL* 13/19* DAYS
FEB: 27* MAR: 20*, 27* APR: 10*, 17*

Bennett & Coleman
THE TIMES OF INDIA
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WHY GENES MATTER

Modern mortality patterns suggest genetics account for up to 56% of lifespan variation

How much do your genes determine how long you will live? It is a question that has fascinated scientists and the public for decades. For years, the answer appeared settled: genetics were believed to account for roughly 20 to 25 per cent of the variation in human lifespan, while the rest depended on lifestyle, environment and chance.

A new study published in Science, however, challenges this long-held assumption, suggesting that the genetic contribution to lifespan may be far greater than previously estimated.

According to the researchers, earlier calculations did not adequately account for how causes of death have changed over time. A century ago, many people died from what scientists describe as extrinsic causes, including infectious diseases, accidents and other external threats that were largely unrelated to biological ageing.

In contrast, deaths in developed countries today are dominated by intrinsic causes associated with ageing itself, such as heart disease, dementia and other age-related conditions. This shift, the researchers argue, alters how genetic influence on lifespan should be understood and measured.

To gain a clearer picture, the research team analysed extensive data from large groups of Scandinavian twins, carefully excluding deaths caused by accidents and infections. They also examined twins who were raised apart and siblings of centenarians in the United States to strengthen the robustness of their findings.

When deaths from external causes were removed from the analysis, the estimated genetic contribution to lifespan rose sharply, from the familiar 20 to 25 per cent to approximately 50 to 55 per cent.

This pattern aligns with existing knowledge about specific diseases. Genetics explain a large share of variation in dementia risk, have an intermediate influence on heart disease, and play a relatively modest role in cancer. As living conditions improve and populations age, diseases linked to biological ageing become more prevalent, making genetic effects appear more prominent.

Crucially, this does not mean that genes have suddenly become more powerful. Rather, it reflects how improvements in the environment change the way genetic influence is expressed and measured.

Human height provides a useful analogy. A century ago, height depended heavily on nutrition and childhood illness. Today, in wealthy societies, most people receive adequate nutrition, reducing environmental variation. As a result, much of the remaining difference in height is explained by genetics, not because nutrition no longer matters, but because most individuals can now reach their genetic potential. A malnourished child will still fail to grow tall regardless of genetic makeup.

The same logic applies to lifespan. Advances in vaccination, sanitation, pollution control, diet and healthcare have reduced environmental risks that once dominated mortality. As these risks decline, genetic differences account for a larger share of the remaining variation in how long people live.

This phenomenon highlights an important concept in genetics: heritability. Heritability is not a fixed biological constant but a population-specific measure that depends on environmental conditions. When environmental variation narrows, the proportion of variation attributed to genetics increases by necessity.

Earlier estimates of genetic influence were not wrong; they reflected historical conditions in which external threats played a much larger role. The new estimate reflects a modern context in which many of those threats have been reduced. In effect, researchers are measuring a different version of lifespan shaped by different circumstances.

The idea that lifespan is "about 50 per cent heritable" can easily be misunderstood. It does not mean genes determine half of an individual's chances of living a long life. Genetic influence varies widely depending on personal circumstances, behaviour, healthcare access and environment.

Some people have genetic profiles that offer protection even under adverse conditions, while others compensate for less favourable genetics through healthy diets, regular exercise and medical care. There are many routes to longevity, and no single genetic combination guarantees a long life.

Which combinations become most common depends entirely on the population being studied and the conditions in which people live and age. As deaths from external causes continue to decline, though they will never disappear entirely, these patterns may continue to evolve.

The authors of the study stress that about half of lifespan variation is still shaped by environment, lifestyle, healthcare and random biological processes, such as uncontrolled cell division in cancer. Their findings, they argue, should renew efforts to identify the genetic mechanisms involved in ageing and longevity.

Understanding how genes interact with different environments may be the key to explaining why some people live much longer than others. The study offers valuable insight into how changing mortality patterns shape our understanding of lifespan, but it does not establish a single universal measure of genetic influence.

In the end, both genes and environment matter, and they matter together. While science continues to refine its understanding, there is unlikely to be a simple answer to how much of any individual's lifespan is determined by genes alone.

Karin Modig, Karolinska Institute The Conversation

MIRRORLIGHTS

GenAI forces rethink of academic assessment

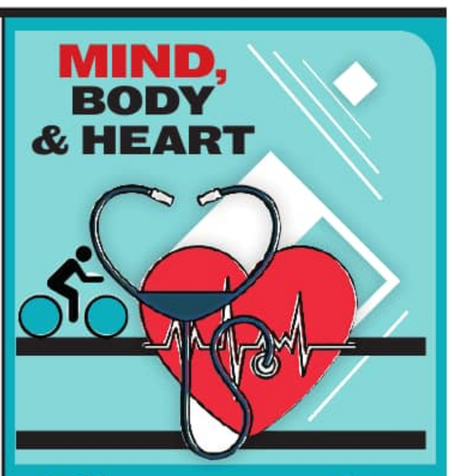
Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) is now firmly embedded in higher education, with students and educators increasingly using chatbots for teaching, learning and assessment. This shift is not merely technical; it is reshaping how knowledge is produced, evaluated and demonstrated. A qualitative study involving 28 educators across Canadian universities and colleges suggests higher education has reached a watershed moment, forcing institutions to reconsider what should be assessed when human cognition can be augmented by algorithms.

A review of 15 years of research on AI and academic integrity shows that AI is a double-edged sword. While advanced tools can generate human-like text, complicating plagiarism detection and sometimes reproducing bias or misinformation, they also offer inclusive learning support, particularly for students with disabilities or those learning in an additional language. Prompting was widely seen as a legitimate, assessable skill when used transparently and grounded in subject knowledge. Critical thinking was viewed as essential, with educators using AI-generated content to test students' ability to evaluate accuracy, bias and credibility.

Educators warned that over-reliance on AI risks undermining the "productive struggle" central to original thought.

In what educators describe as a post-plagiarism era, co-creation with AI does not automatically constitute misconduct. Instead, integrity depends on transparency.Universities now face a choice: treat AI as a threat, or use it to strengthen assessment, learning and ethical decision-making.

Sarah Elaine Eaton, Beatriz Antonieta Moya Figueroa and Robert Brennan, University of Calgary; Rahul Kumar, Brock University The Conversation



All you need to know about...

Hair care

Identify the root cause
Hair thinning is rarely random and often signals an internal imbalance. Issues such as iron deficiency, thyroid irregularities, postpartum hormonal changes and nutritional deficiencies candisrupt the hair growth cycle. A proper medical evaluation, including blood tests, can help detect deficiencies or hormonal concerns before significant hair loss occurs.

Nourish hair from within
Hair health depends heavily on internal nutrition. Diets lacking protein, iron, vitamin D and essential fatty acids weaken hair strands, making them prone to shedding and breakage. Hydration is equally vital, as dehydration can make hair dull, brittle and fragile, worsening the appearance of thinning over time.

Simplify your hair care routine
Overstyling often worsens thinning. Excessive washing, frequent colouring, tight hairstyles and regular heat styling strain hair follicles gradually. Switching to gentle, sulfate-free shampoos, reducing heat exposure, loosening hairstyles and allowing recovery time between chemical treatments can minimise stress-related hair fall and prevent unnecessary breakage.

Balance hormones and stress levels
The role of hormonal fluctuations and stress in hair thinning. Thyroid imbalances, estrogen changes and prolonged stress can disrupt growth cycles. Adequate sleep, stress management, mindful practices and medical guidance help restore balance.

Prevention, not just correction
Early dermatological consultation helps preserve density. Timely intervention yields better long-term outcomes.

—Femina

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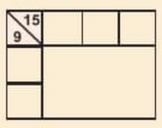
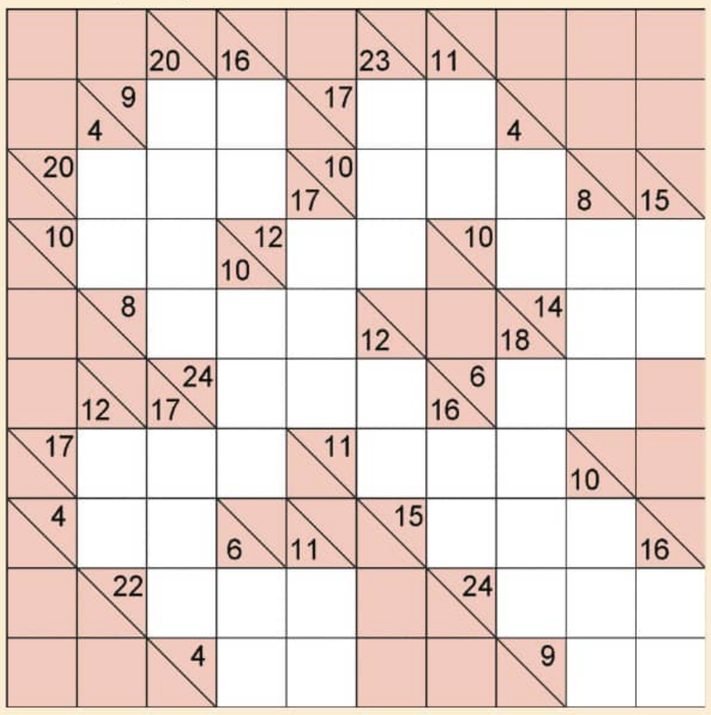
@BangaloreMirror

Kakuro

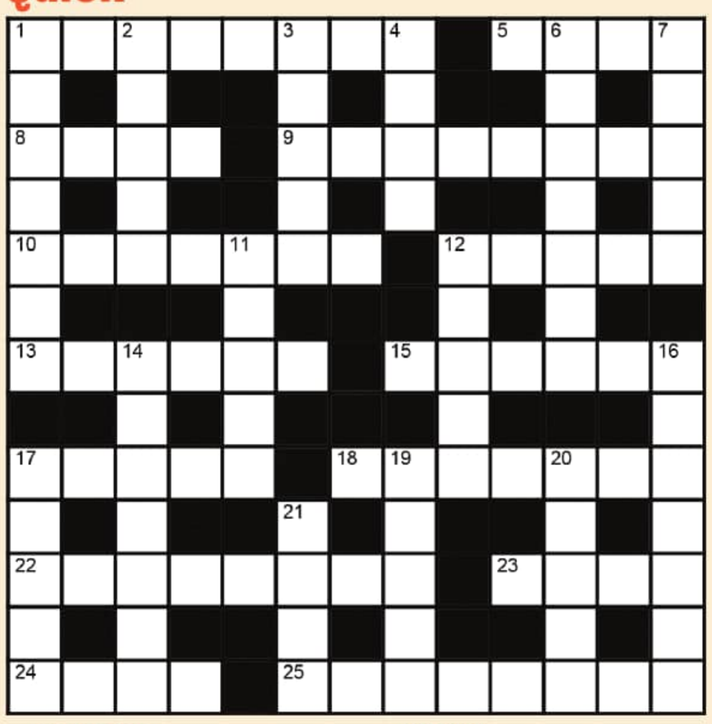
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Governor of Karnataka from 2009 to 2014 (8)
5 A short, usually comical, theatrical sketch (4)
8 Atop or over (4)
9 Cold Spanish soup (8)
10 Singers Frank and Nancy (7)
12 In the company of (5)
13 Vary (6)
15 Consult (6)
17 Sidestep (5)
18 Postpones (7)
22 Newsman Rajdeep ____ (8)
23 Opposed (4)
24 Time past (4)
25 Astronaut (8)

DOWN

1 Injured or wounded (7)
2 Decorate (5)
3 Bet (5)
4 Kind of music (4)
6 Start of a football match? (4-3)
7 Leather strap (5)
11 Subject or topic (5)
12 Unaccompanied (5)
14 One of the few players to have won five Wimbledons in a row (7)
16 Putin's compatriot (7)
17 Not so clean or not so sharp (5)
19 Israeli port (5)
20 Poison (5)
21 Inquires of (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: E EQUALS G

XMYN ORA R DJKQNTSCP DRB JS DNNQMKE JCX XON XTMUMRP.

Linemaro

Can I tie your shoes? Because I can't have you fall for someone else

Mindchow

Don't spend time beating on a wall, hoping to transform it into a door

Joke of the day

If your time ain't come, not even a doctor can kill you

Loop

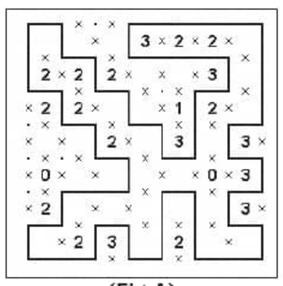
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

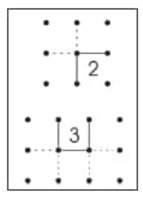
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

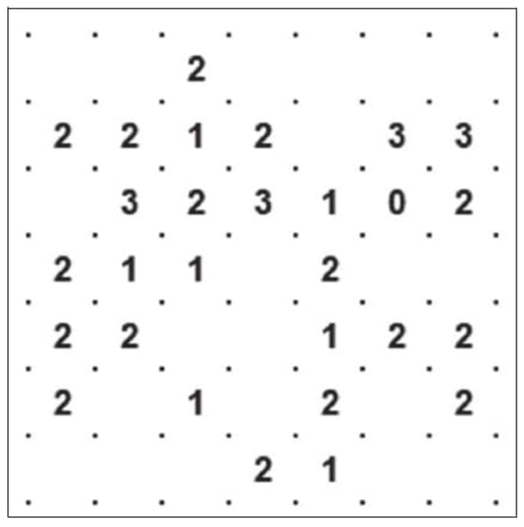
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



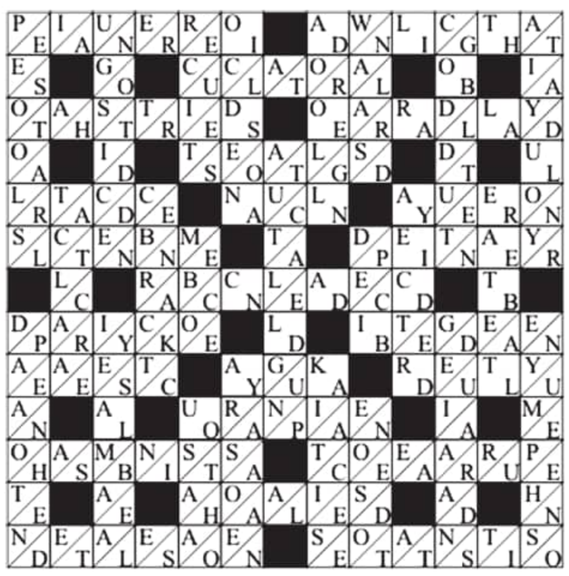
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



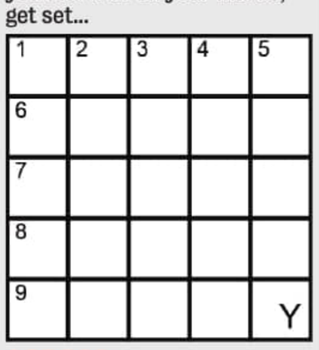
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

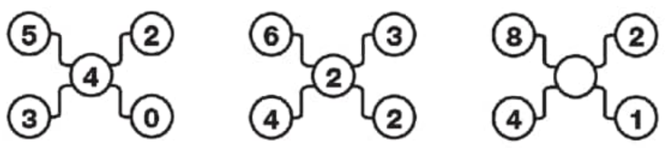
1 T-bars; 6 Ova he; 7 Assam; 8 J sail; 9 Lay in

DOWN

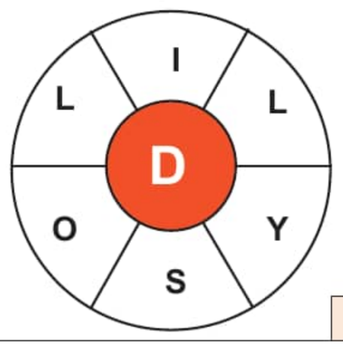
1 Jab hi; 2 Norma; 3 I lava; 4 Least; 5 Says S

Mensapuzzle

Which number goes in the empty circle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

08 Average; **09** Good; **11** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

		2		4		5		
9				3				4
		6	8		2	7		
	7		5		4		8	
5								7
	4		9		8		3	
		5	7		9	6		
8				5				1
		9		1		3		

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 13

5 7 7 8

Medium = 4

1 6 7 8

Hard = 5

1 4 6 7

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

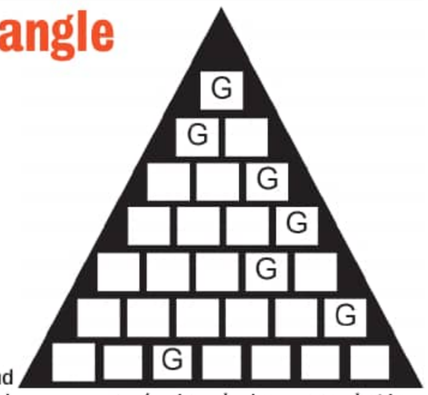
Differences: 1. Finger is moved. 2. Bush is missing. 3. Nose is different. 4. Hair is different. 5. Button is added. 6. Man is thinner.

Riddler

For each of the pairs of words below, insert a word in the blank space between them to form two separate words such that the inserted word finishes the first word and begins the second.

Alpha triangle

1 Gravity, symbol
2 Move
3 Record
4 Pine for
5 Jargon
6 Not winning
7 Multitudes

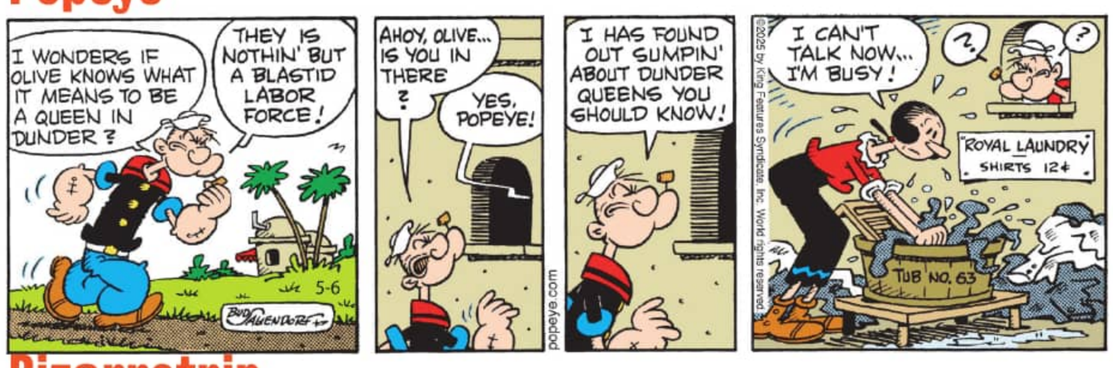


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

Popeye


I WONDERS IF OLIVE KNOWS WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A QUEEN IN DUNDER?
THEY IS NOTHIN' BUT A BLASTID LABOR FORCE!
5-6
AHOY, OLIVE... IS YOU IN THERE?
YES, POPEYE!
I HAS FOUND OUT SUMPIN' ABOUT DUNDER QUEENS YOU SHOULD KNOW!
I CAN'T TALK NOW... I'M BUSY!
ROYAL LAUNDRY SHIRTS 12¢
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Bizarrotrip

All right, dad. I'll tell my friends to quit calling you a doomsday prepper.
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Diamond Lil

I REMEMBER ONE HALLOWEEN WHEN I WAS SO POOR I COULDN'T AFFORD A COSTUME...
SO I TOOK OFF MY SHIRT AND WENT AS A DOORBELL
A DOOR-BELL?
FORTUNATELY I HAVE AN OUTIE!
10/25
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Beatkart

Hart of the city

DING DONG!
OKAY, WHO ELSE SHOULD STILL BE ON THEIR WAY...
10/25 YESSIR!
HEART OF THE CITY © 2020 ANDREWS MCMEEL
GREETINGS AND HAPPY HALLOWEEN!
CELESTE (13) CHARLOTTE'S COOL TEEN SISTER.
CHARLOTTE (11) BEST FRIEND
YOU REMEMBER MY SISTER CELESTE, RIG!
I'M SO HONORED THAT A COOL TEENAGER WANTS TO COME TO MY PARTY.
GOCOMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY
DON'T GET TOO EXCITED, SHE'S NOT COOL.
HEY!!

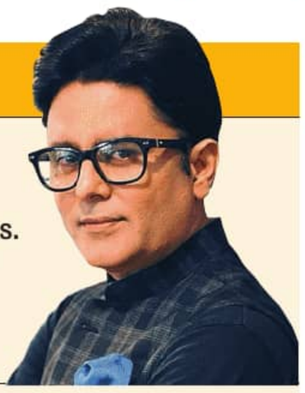
Crankshaft

WAIT A MINUTE! ARE YOU ALSO THE ATTORNEYS FOR THE MOTHER ON MY BUS ROUTE...
WHO'S SUING ME FOR VIOLATING HER DAUGHTER'S CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO GLITTER?
10-25
© 2025 Mediagraphics, Inc. Dist. by Andrews McMeel Syndication
NOT TO WORRY... EVERYTHING HERE AT MARLEY, SCROOGE AND BILLINGS IS INSTITUTIONALLY SILOED!
BATIUK & DAVIS

Mutts

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR



If it's your birthday today

This year, your career demands bold leadership and innovative thinking. Romantic life settles into a nurturing rhythm, especially during winter holidays. Travel plans focused on cultural immersion bring profound personal insights. Domestic responsibilities increase but offer deep emotional satisfaction. Monitor your health closely during seasonal changes. A surprising financial windfall in the future supports a long-held dream or personal project.

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20

Generous blessings from your elders will help you overcome any hurdles today. Students will find great clarity regarding higher education. Consider a religious visit to enhance your peace and spiritual.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20

You will successfully find a perfect balance and resolve any lingering issues within your household today. Simply stay away from workplace negativity to ensure your day remains peaceful and very calm.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21

The moon blesses you today, significantly uplifting your mood and boosting your productivity at work. Make the absolute most of this favourable energy, as it is truly in your best.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23

Today you will enjoy a wonderful sense of control over everything happening around you. Use this powerful energy to complete your tasks efficiently and enjoy the satisfaction of getting things.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23

Shift your focus from professional demands to your personal life today. Singles should venture out to meet interesting people, while couples will thrive by spending quality time with their significant togetherness.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23

Allow yourself to fully experience and understand your emotions today without pushing them down. Taking a rest day is perfectly okay if you need to nurture your heart and mental peace.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22

Balance will manifest beautifully in every aspect of your life today. Your finances are also set for a significant boost, resolving previous issues and making this a truly fantastic day

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22

High energy levels will open exciting new doors in your personal relationships today. Reach out to an old friend to rekindle your bond, remembering that personal connections are incredibly valuable one.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22

Happy moments await you at home as your family finds time to bond. Your social charisma is high, making it a perfect day for singles to start a special new goal.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20

Instead of overspending on luxuries today, focus on the emotional support offered by those who love you. Spending time with your inner circle will provide the deep comfort you've craved.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19

It is a wonderful day to be a social butterfly and re-establish your network. These connections may last a lifetime or provide helpful support, so enjoy engaging with everyone with everyone.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20

Although work will be busy today, you will feel incredibly relaxed once the tasks are complete. Reward your hard work by unwinding and enjoying quality time with your loved ones.

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KIDZONE

Rahul, Bengaluru

Ateeba, Bengaluru

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SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M

[(5√7 * 2√7) / 14] + 125
(70 / 14) + 125
5 + 125 = 130

BULL'S EYE

dill, dolly, doll
dolly, idly, idol
idyll, sill, sold
solid, SOLIDLY

STRIKE OUT

FAST FIVE

B	R	A	T	S
H	O	V	E	A
A	M	A	S	S
J	A	I	L	S
I	N	L	A	Y

RIDDLER

LINE (bowline, lineage), TIC (genetic, tickling), SCAPE (landscape, scapegoat)

QUICK

QUOTE UNCODE

Time has a wonderful way of weeding out the trivial.

MENSA PUZZLE

4. In each figure, the sum of the left hand digits divided by the sum of the right hand digits gives the central value.

SUDOKU

3	8	2	1	4	7	5	9	6
9	1	7	6	3	5	8	2	4
4	5	6	8	9	2	7	1	3
2	7	3	5	6	4	1	8	9
5	9	8	3	2	1	4	6	7
6	4	1	9	7	8	2	3	5
1	3	5	7	8	9	6	4	2
8	6	4	2	5	3	9	7	1
7	2	9	4	1	6	3	5	8

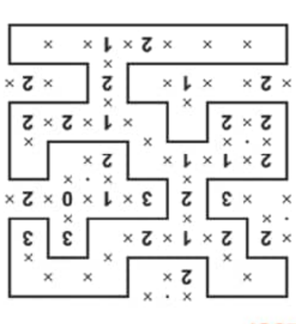
ALPHA TRIANGLE

G, Go, Log, long, Lingo, losing, Legions.

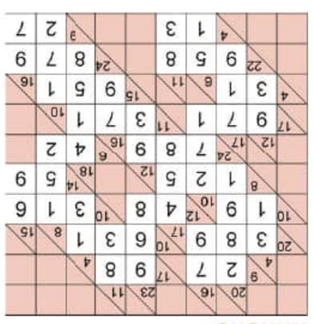
GO FIGURE

Easy
7 + 8 – 7 + 5 = 13
Medium
6 + 7 – 8 – 1 = 4
Hard
7 – 6 x 4 + 1 = 5

LOOP



KAKURO



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SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Publicity plan falters

The much-awaited multi-lingual film Koragajja has once again landed in controversy, this time over a poorly attended promotional event in Kochi. The film's team has faced repeated hurdles since the project went on floors, and the latest setback involves what they describe as a lukewarm response from the local media. Director Sudheer Attavar said elaborate arrangements were made for promotions in Kerala, including inviting veteran Bollywood actor Kabir Bedi to attend the event scheduled on January 24.

However, the programme reportedly failed to draw sufficient media presence. "We had to go ahead with the event as we could not afford to cancel or postpone it. We also tried to persuade Kabir Bedi to attend, but were informed that he had to travel abroad," the director said.

Attavar expressed disappointment, stating that he is a long-time admirer of Mammootty and had expected support for the Kannada project. He alleged that promotions for Mammootty's film Katha Pacha at the same venue adversely affected Koragajja's event.

Veteran Kannada actress Bhavya termed the episode embarrassing for Kabir Bedi but said promoting another film was not wrong, noting that Koragajja's programme had been fixed and communicated a week in advance. The event, originally scheduled for 8 pm, was later advanced to 5 pm.

Parthan progresses

Kannada audiences who remember the family drama Rathnan Prapancha are set to witness a tonal shift with its thematic successor, Parthan Parpancha, which is being mounted as a courtroom drama with suspense-thriller elements. The film is currently under production at Sri Kanteerava Studios and is directed by Sriharsha MS, with Seetha Harshavardhan backing the project under the Siri Cinemas banner.

The film features a strong ensemble including Annaiah-fame Vikas in the lead, Mandara, Rangayana Raghu, Amith, and Sampath Maithreya. According to the director, the narrative unfolds entirely in Bengaluru and blends legal drama with suspense, placing the courtroom at the heart of the story. Rangayana Raghu essays the role of a defence lawyer, while Seetha appears as the public prosecutor.

Vikas, who also portrays an advocate, said the script strongly connects with the present generation and thanked the director for his encouragement. Mandara shared that she had been waiting for a meaningful role after Blank and was instantly drawn to this character. Cinematography by Jai Anand, music by Ananth Aryan.

Arjun's emotional tribute

Actor Arjun Kapoor marked the birth anniversary of his late mother, Mona Shourie Kapoor, with an emotional tribute that resonated strongly with fans and colleagues alike. Taking to Instagram, the actor shared a set of old black-and-white photographs, offering a glimpse into cherished moments from the past and reflecting on how deeply he continues to miss her.

Alongside the pictures, Arjun wrote about resilience, loss, and the values his mother instilled in him. "Happy birthday Maa, I miss u so much today. Life's been kinda cruel to me lately but it's ok… I've taken the punches before, I'll take em again & still rise," he shared, adding that she taught him to face life head-on with grace and dignity. He concluded on a hopeful note, saying he believes they will celebrate her birthday together someday.

The post drew warm responses from several members of the Kapoor family, including Janhvi Kapoor, Khushi Kapoor and Sanjay Kapoor, who expressed their love and support.

Mona Shourie Kapoor passed away in 2012 after battling prolonged health issues. Arjun has often honoured her memory on significant days, sharing personal reflections about the lasting impact of her absence.

Career- wise Arjun last seen in Mere Husband Ki Biwi, and is now preparing for his No Entry 2 upcoming film sequel. **—ETimes**

Mrunal on love's healing power

Actor calls love transformative, denies Dhanush wedding rumours

Mrunal Thakur, who is currently promoting her latest music video Bheegi Bheegi, has opened up about her deeply personal views on love, calling it a powerful force that heals, transforms, and nurtures emotional growth. Speaking amid ongoing relationship rumours linking her to Dhanush, the actor described love as an experience that helps people evolve into better versions of themselves.

In an interview with Filmygyan, Mrunal shared that she believes love is something everyone deserves to experience at least once in their lifetime. "Love is a beautiful feeling and should happen to each and everyone on this planet. It changes you into a better person. It is literally like reparenting and fixing your inner child issues. It's the most beautiful thing in the world. I really pray and hope that everyone finds love in their life," she said.

When asked whether women are more giving when they fall in love, Mrunal disagreed, stressing that generosity in love is not gender-specific. "Anyone who is in love is more giving. But what is important in love is to accept it also. Sometimes it is very difficult to receive and acknowledge love. The definition of love has been changing," she explained. Emphasising that love remains a constant emotion, she added, "Jab pyaar hota hai, you just do things for that person. You just surrender."

Mrunal is currently busy promoting Bheegi Bheegi, composed by A R Rahman, sung by A R Ameen and Jasleen Royal, with lyrics by Irshad Kamil. The music video also features Dulquer Salmaan and has been praised for its soulful sound and striking visuals.

Meanwhile, rumours about Mrunal and Dhanush planning a private wedding on February 14, 2026, have been officially debunked.

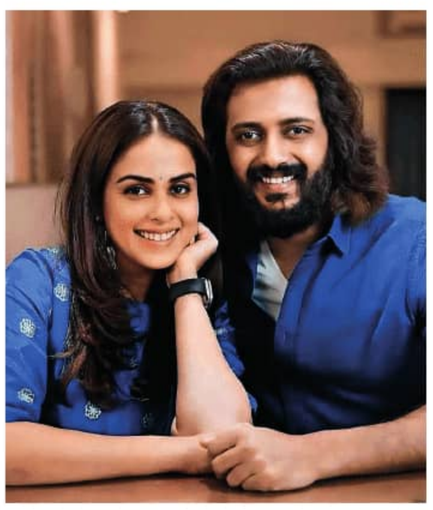
Rumors swril, but Mrunal says career first, Dhanush just friend. **—ETimes**

Enduring Bollywood love

Genelia Deshmukh recently marked her wedding anniversary with husband Riteish Deshmukh by sharing a heartfelt Instagram post that quickly caught fans' attention. "I love you partner – today, tomorrow – forever," she wrote, adding, "You will always be my favourite chapter in this beautiful story called Life." She signed off with a simple "Happy Anniversary," capturing the warmth that has defined their relationship for over two decades.

Their love story began in 2003 on the sets of their debut film Tujhe Meri Kasam. First impressions were far from perfect — a teenage Genelia found Riteish arrogant, while he felt she was a little strange. But as filming progressed, those perceptions changed, giving way to friendship and eventually romance.

The film launched both their careers, and their easy chemistry soon became evident, including in later projects such as Masti. Despite growing popularity, they chose to keep their relationship largely private.



Riteish once revealed that during long outdoor shoots, they wrote letters to each other every day, as calls and messages were expensive.

The couple married in 2012, now parents of two, their 24- year bond of love, respect and family still inspires fans world wide.
—ETimes

Wildflower win controversy

Billie Eilish made headlines at the Grammy Awards after winning Song of the Year for Wildflower, but her acceptance speech quickly became the centre of online debate. While thanking collaborators and supporters, the singer addressed the United States' immigration climate and criticised U S Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), declaring, "No one is illegal on stolen land," and urging people to keep speaking up, protesting, and fighting for immigrants' rights.

The phrase, referencing the displacement of Indigenous and Native American communities following European settlement, sparked intense reactions across social media. Supporters praised Eilish for using her platform to highlight humanitarian concerns, while critics accused her of hypocrisy and being disconnected from everyday realities. Political statements at awards shows keep provoking sharply polarised public reactions worldwide across audiences. **—ETimes**